1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda 1.

his dairy the *palol* always turns to the left, so that he faces north-east as he goes towards his buffaloes. In a few dairies the door faces directly west, and, according to Breeks, this is the case at the conical dairy of Anto. 343

THE TODA BUFFALO

The Toda buffalo is a variety of the Indian water-buffalo, but the life on the hills seems to have produced a much finer animal than that of the plains. Although thoroughly under the control of the Todas, the buffaloes are semi-wild and often attack people of a different race from their owners, and Europeans have frequently been severely injured by the onslaught of these animals. 136 231 234 825

The Toda name for the male buffalo is *er*, and for the female *ir*, but either term may be used when the people speak of buffaloes collectively. Calves have different designations at different ages. A young calf is *kar*, one from one to two years of age is *pol*, and a three-year-old calf is *nakh*.

Defective buffaloes, and especially those with only one horn, are called *kwadrir*, and those whose horns bend downwards are *kughir*. Barren buffaloes are called *maiir*.

There are considerable differences of colour among the buffaloes. Those much lighter than the rest are called *nerir* or *pushtir*, and there is a legend about the origin of these buffaloes, which, however, I failed to obtain. The only obvious way in which the animals differ from one another in marking is that some have a black stripe running down either side of the neck very much in the position which would be occupied by the chain suspending a bell.

There do not seem to be any physical differences between the buffaloes of different classes, and, as we shall see shortly, the nature of the breeding of the Toda buffaloes is such as would have entirely destroyed any distinctions of the kind if they had ever existed.

Every adult female buffalo has an individual name, which is usually given when her first calf is born. The number of buffalo names is limited, so that many buffaloes bear the same name. 234 552

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

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but see that both convenience and good habits have been consulted in following these rules.

Before eating, each member of the family takes a little of the food in his fingers, and raising it to the forehead says Swâmi! Swâmi![7] then places it on the ground as a present to bhumi tai[8] or mother earth. After meals these offerings are swept out of doors.

Before the Englishman came to the Nilagiris, and colonised the Todas' land, the country was full of game; hares, peafowl, partridge, jungle fowl, and numerous small birds, filled the secluded woods: deer of sorts, bison, and jungle-sheep roamed their open pastures: the tiger and leopard were common: and packs of the wild dog—chen nai[9]—running mute, hunted the largest deer with the unerring certainty of fate. The Toda buffalos, half-wild, had learnt to defend themselves and their young by tactics, the offspring of their bravery and skill; forming a rough triangular phalanx, with the courageous and strong bulls at apex and flanks, and the females and young in the hollow of the base, they would face the common enemy, and charging him in a body, gore and trample him under foot. The Todas, confident in the prowess of these animals, leave them to be herded by mere striplings armed with light wands; knowing that the amimals, and the children under their protection, would be perfectly safe.

Yet in the face of these attractions of sport: in the presence of considerable danger: and with the example of the brute creation before them, they have not adopted a weapon, even one so simple as a spear. They neither make nets, nor do they construct traps or pitfalls. They do not employ any of

[7] Swâmi = *lord*.

[8] Bhumi tai = *earth mother*. It appears likely that both the words and the practice have been copied from the Badagas.

[9] Chen = *red*, nai = *dog*. May not the French *chien* be derived from chen = *the red (one)*?

4: King G-5 (no date) 1870 Nilgiri Toda NW60

which haunt the hills, although the latter, as I can testify, frequently attack and kill his buffaloes. During my sojourn out there, parties of Todas would often come many miles distance to give us information of these occurrences, both for the sake of the *enam*, or present, they got for so doing, as well as to obtain the assistance of a rifle or two, to rid them of their enemy. The practice on these occasions is to repair to the spot where the carcase of the partly-eaten buffalo has been left, and to lie in wait till dark for the tiger, which invariably returns at night to feast on his prey. To show the activity and endurance of these men, I may mention that I have seen them at such times, after having walked ten or twelve miles in the heat of the sun, stand talking to one another till our horses were ready, and then, without any sort of refreshment or rest whatever, set out on their return with the greatest alacrity, keeping up with us the whole way.

The buffaloes in question are of the kind one sees in Egypt and on the plains of India, black-skinned, ungainly animals, sparsely sprinkled with long coarse bristles, and having wide-spreading flattened horns. The herds belonging to the Todas comprise, however, very much larger and finer animals than are to be found in the low country; they are, moreover, exceedingly savage when Europeans come near them. I have frequently been charged by a whole herd when on horseback, and obliged to take to a smart canter to avoid them. Nevertheless, one may see them any day driven at will by little naked Toda urchins. Each *mund* has an enclosure or pen called a *Tooel*, in which the buffaloes are confined at night; it is generally circular in form, and consists of a low wall of loose stones surrounding a sunk area within. As these pens are never cleaned out, the interior becomes in time so much elevated, that the fence has to be heightened by the addition of thorns and cut branches. When the buffaloes come home at evening, the Todas who may be standing near invariably salute them with the greatest gravity and respect. Though they have numerous large herds of these animals, the Todas never kill them for food, keeping them solely for the sake of their milk. There are a certain number of sacred buffaloes belonging to each of their *terrarees*, or holy places, and these are never milked, but with their young by their sides, lead a privileged life, the honour being apparently hereditary. Milk is, it may be mentioned, the principal diet of these people, either in its natural state, or sour, like